

Submitter: Catherine Day
On Behalf Of: Osborne Aquatic Center
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital Construction
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5531

I've probably spent more hours at Osborne Aquatic Center than any other place in town besides my own home. Both my boys learned to swim there, starting at 1 years old through Fast Track, the class designed to get kids ready to join swim team. Osborne swim lessons and pools area always full. I believe they average 700 lessons a week. It is the most used facility in Corvallis, even compared with the library and the senior center. It is also one of the most inclusive places I have ever been, providing swimming and aquatic therapy to all different kinds of people with a range of abilities and needs.

When my oldest kid was in third grade he joined CAT (Corvallis Aquatic Team) and it was a positive influence in his life for the next five years. That wasn't a surprise--it has a wonderful reputation with caring, dedicated coaches. But what was a surprise was how important it became for our whole family during the pandemic. CAT was able to safely adapt their practice schedule to stay open during the entire pandemic. My son swam three days a week at that time and it was often the only reason we left the house. Driving him to swimming was the most normal thing we did each week for a year and I will always be grateful for that. It seems like a small thing but it kept us sane.

We were very excited for our youngest to join swim team, which he did in 2024...but unfortunately that was interrupted by the unexpected and devastating news that our pool wasn't safe and would have to be closed. Since then it has felt like there is a hole in our lives. We used the pool weekly for open rec, swim team practice, and most recently, my older son was training to become a lifeguard. I can't imagine living in Corvallis without this pool.

As a volunteer for CAT I know how extensively this pool serves not just Corvallis, Philomath, and Albany, but the whole state. It is used extensively for swim meets and other large competitions for CAT and other teams in its league, high school swimming, and water polo. It was also where the special olympics was held every year.

It is also:

- 1 of 2 indoor facilities in the state with a long course pool
- centrally located in the state for ease of accessing across the state
- one of few facilities in the state that has accessibility for adaptive swimming
- with so many rivers and the ocean in Oregon, safe, monitored water spaces need to

be prioritized in order to teach water safety skills and provide safe places for residents to cool off and recreate

From a Corvallis perspective:

- events at Osborn bring in \$1.5M to the Corvallis community
- employs >100 hourly wage employees (important for high school & college students)
- provides scholarships for low income families to take advantage of swim lessons and open rec
- warm pool which is good for therapy and keeping toddlers warm as they become water comfortable/safe
- hosts various groups: ROTC for skills training/drills, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts for badge certifications, scuba diving certifications, underwater hockey, etc

Thank you for considering this vital request. Without it our community and the whole state will lose this bustling, joyful, much needed and most beloved pool.